



Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5980th meeting

Wednesday, 24 September 2008, 2.30 p.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Yoda	(Burkina Faso)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. De Gucht
	China	Mr. Du Xiacong
	Costa Rica	Mr. Ballesteros
	Croatia	Mr. Vilošić
	France	Mr. Kouchner
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Ms. DiCarlo
	Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

The situation in Chad, the Central African Republic and the subregion

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The meeting was called to order at 2.45 p.m.

Expression of welcome to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France

The President (*spoke in French*): At the outset of the meeting, I should like to acknowledge the presence at the Council table of His Excellency Mr. Karel de Gucht, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, and of His Excellency Mr. Bernard Kouchner, Minister for Foreign Affairs of France. On behalf of the Security Council, I extend a warm welcome to them.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Chad, the Central African Republic and the subregion

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (S/2008/601 and Add.1)

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Chad, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Allam-mi (Chad) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Javier Solana, High Representative of the European Union.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Javier Solana, High Representative of the European Union, and invite him to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them documents S/2008/601 and Addendum 1, which contain the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad.

I now give the floor to Mr. Javier Solana, High Representative of the European Union.

Mr. Solana (*spoke in French*): It is a great honour for me to be here this afternoon, and I thank you, Mr. President, for the invitation. My greetings go to all members of the Security Council and, in particular, to Mr. Bernard Kouchner, whose country currently holds the presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Under the mandate issued by the Security Council, the European Union-led military force in Chad and the Central African Republic (EUFOR) has been deployed for six months. Today there are more than 3,300 troops on the ground. During this period, EUFOR has deployed a powerful and mobile force in a theatre far from Europe and difficult to reach. EUFOR has been patrolling a particularly extensive area; it has put in place protective measures for humanitarian organizations, which have clearly improved humanitarian access. EUFOR has lend its support to the ongoing deployment of United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), and I can say that cooperation between EUFOR and MINURCAT is exemplary, and we welcome that.

All of this has taken place with the full cooperation of the authorities of Chad and the Central African Republic, and with full transparency vis-à-vis all countries of the region. The presence of EUFOR has undoubtedly contributed to stabilizing eastern Chad and the northern Central African Republic. Humanitarian personnel attest to that, as do refugees and internally displaced persons. Returns are under way as well; that is certainly encouraging.

The presence of EUFOR has helped to ease regional tensions; that is key, because what happens in Chad and the Central African Republic is linked to what happens in Darfur, and vice versa. Ongoing political efforts between Chad and the Sudan are on the

right track. Those efforts must be pursued and consolidated.

For now, the situation is calm, but it remains fragile. EUFOR will depart, as announced, on 15 March 2009. Our concern is to avoid a security vacuum on that date.

For those reasons, at the time of the midterm review which brings us together today, I believe it is of fundamental importance to stress three points: first, the vital need for an appropriate handover for EUFOR by the United Nations on 15 March 2009; secondly, it is necessary for this handover to encompass both Chad and the Central African Republic, because the two situations are geopolitically linked; and thirdly, a prompt Security Council decision is needed, making possible timely planning by the United Nations. We will do all we can to assist the United Nations in all areas to ensure that the transition is successful.

The handover will not mark the end of the European Union commitment in the region. The European Union will continue to be an active player with respect to Darfur, which I hope will ultimately enable refugees to return to their homes. The European Union will contribute to the financing of the Chadian *Détachement intégré de sécurité*, whose members have been and will continue to be trained by MINURCAT. The Union will also contribute to the economic and social reconstruction programme in eastern Chad, which, along with a secure environment, will facilitate the return of displaced persons to their homes.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Solana for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to Council members wishing to make comments or ask questions in response to the briefing we have just heard.

Mr. Kouchner (France) (*spoke in French*): I greet all my colleagues seated here around the table. I would like in particular to welcome my former foreign ministerial colleague, the Permanent Representative of Chad to the United Nations, since, as the High Representative of the European Union has just told us, nothing would be accomplished without the participation of the Africans. Nothing would be done or would have been done without the participation and the agreement of Chad, of course, but also of the entire African Union.

It has not been easy to make it clear that the people of eastern Chad demand security. So I thank Javier Solana and I am very pleased that the action of the European Union-led military force in Chad and the Central African Republic (EUFOR) has been described here, as this is the largest autonomous military operation ever deployed by Europe. EUFOR in Chad and in the Central African Republic symbolizes, to my mind, the European Union contribution to United Nations action, first and foremost.

But I know that this is not the first time that Europeans have committed themselves alongside the United Nations in Africa. I recall that, in 2003 and 2006, the European Union was also deployed in the context of its Common Foreign and Security Policy and its Common Security and Defence Policy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; let us recall that fact. And the outcome was positive.

By taking the initiative last year of adopting resolution 1778 (2007), we wanted to provide a response to the regional dimension of the Darfur crisis as a complement, of course, to the actions undertaken by the United Nations and the African Union in Darfur itself, and in fact on the other side of the border. This EUFOR operation is working smoothly, and I thank Mr. Solana for pointing that out. But it is not going as smoothly as we had expected, since we had thought that on the other side of the border, in the Sudan, a hybrid force would be deployed: in an African Union-United Nations force that would have been a counterpart to EUFOR, which would have provided complete security to the population — to more than a million persons — refugees, displaced persons and Chadian populations within Chad.

Eastern Chad and the north-western Central African Republic need both protection and humanitarian assistance. But they will never have that in full if, on the other side of the border, a similar force is not deployed to contain the rebellion that is spilling over to both sides of the border.

Thanks to the commitment of the numerous countries that have contributed to this operation, EUFOR is fulfilling its role effectively, and the European mission has been able to provide security to this zone. And there is no need for me to recall the recent incidents that resulted in deaths.

The non-governmental organizations and the United Nations agencies also welcome the presence of

the European forces, as they can attest. We have always played our role by deploying rapidly more than 3,000 troops. Moreover, the operation has also been appreciated by the great non-governmental organization Oxfam, which recently reported that EUFOR has made numerous refugees and displaced peoples feel safer and has been able to act in an impartial manner, which was far from easy to do.

However, despite EUFOR's small successes, there is a persistent lack of security, which is fed by the lack of a sustainable political solution and by the difficulties encountered in the deployment of an operational police force. I apologize for emphasizing this point, but there has to be an operational police component, in particular in order to provide security for the refugee camps and the areas surrounding them. I referred earlier to displaced persons in Chad, but there are also refugees. They benefit, of course, from the support provided by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, but these people still lack security.

The activities on the ground of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) and the Chadian *Détachement intégré de sécurité* provided for in resolution 1778 (2007) are indispensable in order to improve security for the civilian population.

I am adamant: without that, we will never be truly satisfied, and the local populations will continue to live through a time of insecurity. Anyone who has visited the camps would know that women are unable to leave the camps without being attacked just 100 metres away. To search for water is a huge trial that they risk their lives to undertake. The danger has abated in some places, but it is not enough.

As Mr. da Silva Angelo indicated to the Council last week (see S/PV.5976), acceleration of the deployment of MINURCAT and the *Détachement intégré de sécurité* is crucial and urgent. I know that I am pressing hard on this point, but I assure the Council that it is necessary. The adoption later today of the draft resolution renewing MINURCAT's mandate is of course important and necessary, and my country fully supports it.

The international community must remain engaged, in particular to lend its support, as emphasized by Javier Solana, to the return of displaced persons under the best possible conditions, and on a

voluntary basis, of course. I understand that a first timid movement has taken place: a few thousand individuals have started to return to the areas they were forced to flee because of the violence. EUFOR only makes sense if there is an effort at development and if the non-governmental organizations are sufficiently safe to allow for the rebuilding of villages. That is what is essential.

Once these steps are undertaken, and once the rainy season is over, the efforts at rebuilding and assistance to the civilian population must be expedited, thanks in particular to financing from the European Commission, which is something that we and Mr. Solana have underscored. We must maintain a sufficient level of security in the areas of return.

In accordance with the guidance of resolution 1778 (2007), the Europeans are in favour of the replacement of EUFOR by a United Nations force in March 2009. We thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2008/601), which closely examines the possible options for this takeover. As Mr. Solana indicated, we must do everything we can to prevent a security vacuum in the area.

The transfer of authority from EUFOR to a United Nations force must take place in good conditions. Otherwise, we will have to start again from scratch. So the transfer must take place in the best possible circumstances and at the time of the expiry of the European Union force. Any option that would postpone this transition would endanger the people whom we have sought to protect and whom we have succeeded in protecting. Therefore, we welcome agreement that has been reached among Security Council members to express, in a resolution renewing MINURCAT's mandate, their intention to deploy a United Nations force to take over from EUFOR, the mandate of which will be decided upon by 15 December.

To conclude, the Secretary-General should now start planning for this force, which we believe should be deployed both in Chad and in the Central African Republic, whose modalities and the size of whose components will have to be carefully studied. It must be capable of meeting the challenges that are faced every day as a result of crime. That is what we will implement in Chad and in the Central African Republic. It is in the spirit of fulfilling our responsibility to protect, an old notion that has been

somewhat forgotten with which the Council is well acquainted. In the spirit of this responsibility to protect, in situations where the civilian population is threatened and exposed to violence, we are committed to providing support on the ground at the request of States, who of course still bear the primary responsibility for protecting their populations.

Mr. de Gucht (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium's commitment to the European Union-led military force in Chad and the Central African Republic (EUFOR) has been constant and demonstrates our concern for security and the humanitarian situation in this area. We have been contributing about 100 personnel to the European mission since the beginning of its deployment to Chad and the Central African Republic. While the presence of EUFOR and the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) is slowly beginning to bear fruit, the security situation has not yet changed fundamentally, and a multidimensional presence will remain necessary beyond 15 March 2009. EUFOR, whose mandate expires on that date, was always intended to be transitional mission, and we are preparing for its replacement by a United Nations military force as part of a strengthening of MINURCAT. I welcome the fact that the Chadian authorities agree with that reasoning and with the deployment of a United Nations force. It is important that the planning for such a United Nations force begin immediately to permit an effective transfer of authority on 15 March 2009. In our view, the force will have to replace EUFOR both in Chad and in the north-eastern part of the Central African Republic, where EUFOR has deployed 200 personnel.

The future component of MINURCAT in the Central African Republic will not necessarily be very much larger, but it could prevent a security vacuum as long as Central African armed forces are unable to undertake security tasks on their own. It will thus be essential to permit efforts to support the security sector — particularly those carried out by the Peacebuilding Commission — to succeed.

More basically, no military force will be able to ensure long-term security if the political context causing the lack of security does not change. For that reason, the international community must also think about the root causes of the lack of security. We must further strengthen our efforts to normalize the relations between the Sudan and Chad, resolve the Darfur crisis,

support national dialogues in Chad and the Central African Republic and facilitate a dialogue between the Chadian authorities and armed groups in Chad, which must lay down their weapons and express their grievances in ways other than violence.

My delegation believes it would be useful to consider the possibility of giving the United Nations a clearer mandate to help find solutions at the political level so that our efforts in the region will have lasting effects. Such a commitment could take a variety of forms, but it must be an element of our debates in the coming months.

Ms. DiCarlo (United States of America): On behalf of the United States, I would like to thank High Representative Solana for his briefing.

We greatly appreciate the efforts of the European Union to provide a safe and secure environment in which the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) can operate. The European Union-led peacekeeping force (EUFOR) has provided invaluable security protection to refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and assistance workers. EUFOR personnel have performed their jobs admirably under very difficult circumstances. We recognize their contributions and ask Mr. Solana to convey to them our deepest gratitude for their efforts.

EUFOR member States have some of the finest and most experienced troops in the world, who have gained unique experience over the past six months while deployed to the region. The proposed follow-on United Nations force would, of course, profit immensely from the continued participation of veterans of the EUFOR deployment. We are very happy to note that some EUFOR member States have expressed interest in participating in the proposed follow-on United Nations force.

We remain very concerned about the continuing political, military and security volatility in the region, outlined in the Secretary-General's report of 12 September (S/2008/601). In particular, we are deeply troubled that internally displaced persons and refugees in Chad and the Central African Republic continue to suffer owing to political instability and general lawlessness and that Sudanese rebel movements continue to recruit from refugee camps in eastern Chad. A follow-on United Nations force must build upon the EUFOR effort and develop the capacity to protect those vulnerable populations.

The United States continues to support the presence of MINURCAT in the Central African Republic. In the Central African Republic, nearly 25,000 IDPs, refugees and humanitarian aid workers are subject to criminal attacks and increasing banditry. We believe that a United Nations military presence is needed in that country to prevent insecurity that could potentially harm those populations.

We note that a well-trained and well-equipped security force must be in place prior to EUFOR's withdrawal next March. There must be a transition period of sufficient duration and with sufficient interaction between the departing and arriving forces. We hope that EUFOR facilities will be transferred to the United Nations, as that would help with deployment in a timely manner.

The armed struggle within Chad continues. We strongly encourage all parties to work diligently towards full implementation of the Dakar Agreement and of all existing peace agreements. We commend the efforts by the Contact Group, and particularly the Government of Libya, for their work to support a comprehensive peace between Chad and the Sudan. We emphasize, as stated in the draft resolution before the Council today, that a proper settlement of the Darfur issue and an improvement in the relations between the Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic would contribute to long-term peace and stability in the region.

Mr. Mantovani (Italy) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to thank Mr. Solana, High Representative of the European Union, for his biannual briefing on the European Union-led peacekeeping force (EUFOR) and the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Chad for being with us this afternoon.

(*spoke in English*)

Italy welcomes the full deployment of the European Union operation and the results that have already been achieved in terms of increased security and better protection of the local population and the humanitarian community. Italy is proud to be part of EUFOR in Chad and the Central African Republic, with a field hospital located in Abéché, which serves the whole mission as well as the people of the neighbouring villages. On the occasion of the Security Council's visit last June, I personally had the privilege of visiting the hospital and its technological structures, which meet the highest standards. I personally

witnessed the presence there of one EUFOR patient and seven Chadian patients from the surrounding villages.

Coming back to the main subject: we have noted that, despite the efforts of the international community, the security situation remains volatile, and only a limited number of returns have taken place. I welcome the establishment by the European Commission of programmes to encourage the voluntary return of internally displaced persons.

I also welcome the reported progress in the deployment of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) and its activities in support of the local gendarmerie. Once again, I wish to note the very good cooperation that the United Nations and the European Union have established, which reflects the strong added value of the increasing coordination between the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of peace and security. We see Chad and the Central African Republic as an important test case of our collective ability to maximize the impact of, and ensure coherence among, various actors and instruments.

We will shortly adopt the draft resolution prepared by France — which I wish to thank — to renew the mandate of MINURCAT. We look forward to an update by the Secretary-General on his planning for a smooth and timely takeover from EUFOR, including the size, mandate and structure of the new force.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Burkina Faso.

I should like to thank Mr. Javier Solana for having briefed the Security Council on the activities of the European Union military operation in Chad and the Central African Republic. The information that he provided is all the more important and useful because the mandate of the European Union-led peacekeeping force (EUFOR) is coming to an end on 15 March 2009. In that regard, the Council must be proactive and find the means to capitalize on EUFOR's accomplishments at a time when the political and security situation remains worrisome in Chad, the Central African Republic and the entire subregion.

We should like to commend the partnership that EUFOR has established with the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad

(MINURCAT) under the mandate entrusted to it in resolution 1778 (2007). For this partnership to bear fruit, it is necessary and urgent to ensure the effective deployment of MINURCAT in order to adequately respond to the increasingly precarious security and humanitarian situation in eastern Chad and the north-eastern Central African Republic.

We look forward with interest to the Secretary-General's assessment of the possible options for the size, structure and mandate of the United Nations military presence aimed at strengthening EUFOR.

To conclude, we thank once again all the countries contributing contingents to EUFOR and we urge them to continue their support to Chad and the Central African Republic in order to restore lasting peace and stability there.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 3.10 p.m.